



Don't be the cat
throwin' food scraps in the trash.
Use your disposal instead.

The average family of four generates 36 lbs. of food waste each week, or nearly 2,000 lbs. a year. Don't send your leftovers to a landfill. Grind them up and send them down the drain to MMSD to be recycled into energy and fertilizer – saving money for all of us.

What can and cannot be put into a disposal?

The standard disposal can handle basic food scraps. However, avoid large amounts at one time. Newer disposals can grind much more, like bones, cornhusks, artichokes and celery.

Standard Garbage Disposal

- Everyday food scraps
- Vegetable peels (ok in small amounts)

Disposer With Advanced Grind Features

- Everyday food scraps
- Vegetable peels
- Celery, corn husks, artichokes and other fibrous material
- Bones, fruit pits and other hard materials



NEVER put fats, oils or grease down the drain. They can lead to basement backups, sewer overflows and expensive plumbing repair bills. Instead, pour grease into a container and throw it in the trash.

How it pays to use your disposal:

Food waste fuels lower sewer bills. Food scraps produce methane gas that MMSD captures and turns into power to run our facilities. We also use food scraps to help make a fertilizer called Milorganite that's sold around the country.

- Food waste is mostly water, so it makes perfect sense to grind it up in a disposal and send it to our water reclamation facilities.
- Food disposals use less than 1% of a household's total water consumption and average less than 50¢ a year in electricity to operate. Commercial disposers use about 12¢ of electricity a day.

Did you know?



- Last year more than 13 million tons of food scraps were sent to landfills in the U.S.
- Modern disposals grind food to less than 1/4 inch in size, so it's safe for household, restaurant and municipal pipes.
- When using a disposal, run cold water down the drain for several seconds afterward to flush food waste through the plumbing system and keep debris from settling in the pipes.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does a disposal help the environment?

Using a disposal allows food waste – which is 70% water – to be ground up and sent through pipes to Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District – your local wastewater treatment facility. That keeps food scraps from being trucked to landfills where the waste decomposes and produces methane, a powerful greenhouse gas linked to global warming.

At MMSD, we can capture the methane generated from food waste and turn it into energy, saving our customers nearly \$2 million a year. We also use food waste to help feed microscopic organisms used in wastewater treatment that we later turn into Milorganite—a fertilizer trusted by the pros for more than 80 years.

Do I need a special disposal or are all disposals good for the environment?

All disposals are environmentally responsible at disposing of food scraps, and there is no need to purchase a certain type of disposal. Disposals basically serve the same function, to grind food waste and send it down the drain. However, there are different models on the market—with some basic, functional models you can't grind any and all kinds of food waste. However, the more technologically advanced models can grind virtually any food waste to extremely fine particles, so you never have to worry about what can or can't be put in your disposer.

Are disposals safe to use, especially with children in the household?

There is a common misconception that disposals have blades. Not true—when food waste enters the grind chamber, blunt lugs throw it against a rotating shredder plate - similar to a cheese grater - grinding it into fine particles that are flushed down the drain. But, if reassurance is what you want, look for a "batch feed" unit—the disposer starts only when a special cover is in place.